



30 Years of the Old Fire Station

On 10th September 1988, 30 years ago, the Old Fire Station - as it is now - opened its doors as a Youth & Community Centre and over the years it has adapted and changed with the needs of the local community.

30 years later in September 2018, we held a celebration featuring a photographic display of our history, a fashion show by members of the sewing class and Maa Shanti (formally Asian Women's Lone Parents Association), complementary therapies and a Tai Chi demonstration. Pictures of the celebration are below, as is a poem written and performed for the occasion by long time service user, Eula Harrison.

A huge thank you goes out to everyone who makes the Centre - and the wider Holloway Neighbourhood Group, what is it today. Here's to the next 30 years...



A Celebration by Eula Harrison

*We are all here to celebrate,
A most auspicious occasion,
HNG has its thirtieth year celebration.*

*Providing help, advice and opportunity,
To the wider community - creating harmony.*

*There always is a warm welcome as you enter the door,
Pleasant smiles at reception places visitors at ease,
When seeking help or advice for whatever there needs,
The receptionists are there to help, that is guaranteed.*

*There are many, many different activities within the centre
Lovingly called The Old Fire Station,
By most who use its facilities,
From Aerobics to Zumba and all in between.*

*Belly Dancing for those with enough energy,
Computing keeping both mind and fingers nimble,
Ladies Gentle Exercise for those with moderate needs,
Also, exercises for the gentlemen,
And Dominoes where they can let off steam.*

*There is gardening, sewing, painting and dancing,
Visits to museums, gardens, parks and day trips,
Pop in to enjoy a film on Fridays and sip a cup or tea,
This Centre is also used by many other groupings.*

*Everyone here I am sure will agree,
What a brilliant neighbourhood hub is HNG,
Bringing this diverse community together,
Allowing different nationalities to gather,
Daily in harmony here in this Centre.*





DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Christmas Events

HNG Volunteers Party, 7th December

1.30 to 4.30pm

OFS Elders Party, 11th December

12.30 to 4.30pm

SP Drop-in Party, 11th December

10.30am to 2pm

The Stress Project & Old Fire Station services are closed from 21st December, opening again on 7th January.

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TALK TO US

We love hearing from you. Anything you can tell us about how to improve our services really helps. Or better - suggest a new activity that you'd like to help set up?

We have a comments box at each centre - please use them. Or contact us via email or phone.

A WINTER WELCOME

Lucy - HNG Chief Executive

Holloway Neighbourhood Group is fortunate in having 2 centres (the Stress Project and the Old Fire Station) from which we deliver our services. We also work in partnerships to broaden our reach.

We are delighted to be leading a partnership of 5 grassroots women's groups, which, starting in January, will deliver physical activity classes across north Islington. By bringing together women from diverse communities, our aim is to reduce social isolation and support women to better access services.

The work will be informed by some research we carried out, earlier this year, with Middle Eastern Women and Society Organisation and Turkish, Kurdish and Cypriot Women's Welfare Group. We consulted local women to discover more about the barriers they face in maintain good physical and mental health. Our report can be found on the HNG website.

Carol - Stress Project Centre Manager

It's been an incredibly busy year for the Stress Project and our therapy centre continues to be a place where people can find useful ways to combat stress, anxiety and depression. We've noticed that the need for our therapy service is ever growing and that workplace stress is on the increase.

We are excited about the benefits of Mindfulness and how it can help reduce the stresses and strains of urban living. This year we've starting delivering Mindfulness for vulnerable young people.

Looking ahead to 2019, we are running Evening Mindfulness Courses - helping to make our service more accessible to those who aren't able to come to the Stress Project during the day.

Antoinette - Old Fire Station Centre Manager

It's a very busy time of the year and we can do with all the help we can get in the run up to our annual elders Christmas dinner - which we want to be the best ever yet. So I would like to say a big THANK-YOU in advance to:

1. Our very own, homegrown volunteers, who really give extra to make this a success
2. Our chef Linda Greene - who is donating her time - everyone has been remembering her fabulously tasty food from last year
3. MrGeneral & Hayley Ja'e DJs who kindly give us a reduced price but deliver top notch reggae and soca tunes
4. The Corporate volunteers from Euromonitor and Islington Council who will decorate, peel veg, greet and serve food on the Big Day.

Also a reminder that our very lovely Art for Wellbeing (no experience required) course continues on alternate Thursdays after the New Year. Come along and give it a go!



Beth - Her Journey So Far

We recently had a chat with one of our newer volunteers - Beth. You might have seen her around the Stress Project enthusiastically welcoming people into the drop-in and in a short time she has become a big part of what we do. Here's what she had to say.

HNG: How long and what drew you to volunteering with the Stress Project?

Beth: 'I started in June 2018 and I'm training to be a counsellor so I wanted some experience not just in a counselling setting but in a more general mental health help environment. I also wanted to spend some time giving back to my community, as I have lived in Holloway for 3 years and found it extremely welcoming and neighbourly.'



HNG: What different things have you done at the Stress Project?

Beth: 'I have been a facilitator at both Tuesday and Thursday drop-ins, volunteered to help at mindfulness and creative writing classes, and generally helped out in the office, whether it's with admin, proofreading or running errands.'

HNG: In what ways do you think you benefited, or what have you learned, from the experience so far?

Beth: 'Through my volunteering, I have met some wonderful people, both volunteers and service users, and formed lasting connections with them. I have learned a lot about mental health services in Islington and the variety of issues faced by members of our community, which I can apply in everyday life and in my counselling training. I've also made some helpful connections in terms of getting to know people in the mental health community. It's definitely changed me for the better!'

HNG: If you left us tomorrow, what would be your lasting memory of the Stress Project?

Beth: 'Sitting with drop-in users when a musician comes in every month, joking about the songs, singing and making requests. Especially at the summer barbecue.'

HNG: What are you looking forward to as your journey at the Stress Project goes on?

Beth: 'Continuing to get to know all the people I've met, as well as meeting new ones and continuing to help maintain this place in the community where people can come for warmth and comfort without pressure.'

Thank you Beth, we've really appreciated your commitment and passion. Long may it continue.

We need you!

We're currently looking for all sorts of volunteers, including;

- Admin or Reception support
- Counsellors & Complementary therapists
- Drop-in & Mindfulness facilitators
- Gardening volunteers

Contact us to find out more.



Above: some of the gardening and Drop-in team



Getting out and about - HNG Trips

Trips out are a big part of what we do at HNG - and since the last newsletter, we have taken service users, or volunteers, on quite a few. So where have we been?

In May, Chelsey & Antionette took service users to the Albert Hall to see Symphonic Rock, performed by the Royal Philomonic Orchestra. This was followed by taking nearly 50 service users for a day out in the blazing sunshine to Margate.

In the late summer Jacqui took a small group of Stress Project volunteers to Kew Gardens. To ring-in the colder weather the Chelsey led a trip along the river in a barge for eleven Old Fire Station service users.

To round out the trips for the year, Chelsey took service users to Islington Town Hall for a talk that was titled, "What were black people doing in World War 1?".

These trips have been very well recieved and we are committed to having more next year. Where would you like to go? Let us know...



Men's Social Group Celebrates its First Birthday

In late November, our Men's Group celebrated it's first birthday. From very small beginnings the group has grown and now has regular games of darts, dominoes, chess and draughts. The group also welcomes outside speakers who offer a range of advice.

The group, which has had over 40 different people attend in the last year, have also been on a few trips out. These have included going to see a dance/movement performance by Shaolin Monks – and a trip south of the river to the Tate Modern to take in some art & culture (and pizza).

Sahir, Group Facilitator and Outreach Worker said; 'If it wasn't for the guys there wouldn't be a group. I've really enjoying seeing how the group has grown over the last year and hopefully we can build on that in the new year.'





Being Mindful - Paul's experience

Mindfulness is about focusing your awareness on the present moment, while calmly acknowledging and accepting your feelings, thoughts and sensations without judgement. At the Stress Project we run both weekly drop-in classes and eight-week courses. So what can you expect in a class? How can it benefit you? We recently spoke to Paul, one of the service users at the Stress Project, about his experience of both the drop-in class and the eight week course.

HNG: What attracted you to the mindfulness course?

Paul: 'For the first few weeks I just came there (the Stress Project) and relaxed. I thought it was a nice space and I felt comfortable in the surroundings and with the people. It wasn't really about the mindfulness to start with, but I started to learn about it. Then I put mindfulness meditations on my phone and started using it at home. It just started working for me. A guy who was in the class had been on the eight week course and recommended it.'

HNG: How does the course differ from the drop-in class?

Paul: 'The drop-in is one hour and the course is a two hour session. With the course you do a meditation and discuss it afterwards and you get handouts. There was subject matter like letting go and there was loads of meditations for different things. The course is quite structured, it gave a bit more understanding and was very thorough. It's quite deep but you can take what you like out of it.'

HNG: How have you incorporated Mindfulness into your life?

Paul: 'Usually, I do it about twice a day. The other day rather than the idea of 'I'm stressed let's meditate', I decided to do a 3 minute breathing meditation. I just did it to relax but I realised a bit later that it set me up nicely for the day. The breathing meditation is the one that really works for me. I've done that one at the bus stop. There's no set pattern just do what you need to do when you need to do it. It's quite freeing really.'

HNG: How has Mindfulness benefited you?

Paul: 'I can feel the changes, I wasn't sleeping and was constantly stressed. I've made a definite decision that it works for me, therefore I make the effort and make the time. One of the basic concepts is about living in the moment, not worrying about the past or the future, I found that very useful. I can do a meditation and live in the moment, I'm quite happy doing that.'

If you'd like to give it a go, we have a evening Mindfulness course starting in February and a free Mindfulness class every Thursday at 4pm. Contact us to find out more.

Mindfulness is clinically proven to help improve sleep, de-stress and reduce anxiety and depression

MINDFULNESS COURSE

Delivered by the Stress Project, a registered charity supporting wellbeing in the local community for over 20 years.

CLINICALLY PROVEN MECT COURSE

Your fee will directly contribute to funding Mindfulness courses for disadvantaged individuals.

Course length
8 WEEKS

When?
**THE STRESS PROJECT
EVERY WEDNESDAY EVENING
20TH FEB - 10TH APRIL
7:15 TO 9:15PM**

Where?
**2 SHELburne ROAD,
HOLLOWAY, N7 6DL**

How much?
£250

(Limited number of concession spaces available, contact us for further information)

To Book:
**STRESSPROJECT.ORG.UK
0207 700 3938
STRESSPROJECT@HNG.ORG.UK**



Holloway
Neighbourhood
Group



TIMETABLES & CONTACTS

Old Fire Station

(All FREE unless stated otherwise)

Monday

11am to 1pm - Living Space Art School for over 40s
1.30pm to 2.30pm - Pilates with Sharon
3.30pm to 4.30pm - Pilates for new students with Sharon

Tuesday

TIME: Islington Council Housing Advice
(18th December, contact the centre for a appointment)
10.30am to 11.30am - Ladies Gentle Exercise with Petra
11.30am to 12.15pm - Tuesday Inbetweeners Activity
(contact the centre for dates available)
12.15pm to 1.15pm - Ladies Gentle Exercise with Petra
1.15pm to 2.15pm - Music (with light refreshments)
(contact the centre for dates available)
2.15pm to 3.30pm - Egyptian Dance with Petronella

Wednesday

10.30am to 11.30am - Mixed Gentle Exercise to music
12 noon to 1pm - Coffee morning with Bingo - £1
12.30pm to 1.30pm - Yoga with Dunya - £2
2pm to 3pm - Men's over 55s exercise with Tina
3pm to 5pm - Men's over 55s Social Club

Thursday

10.30am to 12.30pm - Art for Wellbing (every other week)

Friday

10.30pm to 12.30pm - Sewing and Pattern Cutting - £3
11.30am to 12.30pm - Tai-Chi with Neil
1.30pm to 3.45pm - Film Club

The Old Fire Station
84 Mayton Street
Holloway
London
N7 6QT

020 7607 9794
firestation@hng.org.uk
www.hng.org.uk
facebook.com/hngN7
Twitter: @HollowayNG

Stress Project

Monday to Thursday - Therapy Programme

The low cost Therapy Programme offers 26 week courses of counselling & 8 week courses of complementary therapy from Monday to Friday. Costs range from £12 to £45. Access is on a referral basis only. Contact us for more information.

Complementary therapies available include Massage, Acupuncture, Shiatsu, Body Psychotherapy & Reiki.

Tuesday

Drop-in - 10.30am to 1pm
Emotional support, advice and a cup of tea. Free
Treatment prices: £8 per 30 minutes & £15 per hour
Treatments include: Massage & Reflexology
Therapeutic gardening is available during drop-in hours

Wednesday

8-week MBCT Mindfulness Course - Enrolling now
Every Wednesday 7.15pm - 9.15pm
Enrollment sessions - 30th January & 13th February
Course from 20th February to 10th April - £250

Thursday

Drop-in - 10.30am to 2pm
Emotional support, advice and a cup of tea. Free
Treatment prices: £8 per 30 minutes & £15 per hour
Treatments include: Massage, Reflexology & Reiki
Therapeutic gardening is available during drop-in hours

1.30pm to 3.30pm - Creative Writing (every other week)
Free

Mindfulness class - 4pm to 5pm. Free

The Stress Project
2 Shelburne Road
Holloway
London
N7 6DL

020 7700 3938
stressproject@hng.org.uk
www.stressproject.org.uk
facebook.com/HNGStressProject
Twitter: @HNGStressProjec